Wage Labor History in Central and Southern Africa

Andrew Cohen, University of Kent and the University of the Free State, and Rory Pilossof, University of the Free State

Summary

Labor in southern Africa changed rapidly over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the region became firmly locked into the global capitalist economy. The development of wage labor in southern Africa adapted to the rapid changes brought about by the minerals revolution and the spread of commercial agriculture. This was also a period of rapid urbanisation, creating both opportunities and challenges for workers. Labor migration and the mobility of both people and ideas, tied the region together often creating a shared experience of working life in both the formal and informal economies. Southern Africa's political, social, and economic development was fundamentally altered by processes of colonisation and the new forms of economic activity that arose from that intrusion. The large-scale exploitation of mineral resources in the late-nineteenth century and the entrenchment of European colonialism reshaped African societies and changed the nature of how, and why, people worked. Broadly speaking, the push of taxes combined with the pull of wages in new mines, farms, and factories slowly coaxed Africans into the capitalist economy. Growing urban centres, and the new occupations they generated, provided alternatives to mine and farm work, as well as providing opportunities for livelihoods based in the 'informal' economy, catering for the needs and desires of the growing number of urban residents.

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The economic shifts evident in southern Africa were radical, and had altered the lives of most Africans in the region by the end of the Second World War. This article will focus on the changes evident in the southern African countries of South Africa, Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia), and Zambia (Northern Rhodesia). These countries represent a mix of different economic models and colonial settler history, which had significant impacts on the labor histories of these countries and the wider region. Given its early exposure to European

colonialism, South Africa provided the crucible in which labor practices were cast and regional trends often followed the South African model. While, obviously, there were multiple forms of labor that predated the colonial period, and that existed outside of the fledgling formal economies, here we will examine the changes and evolution in mining, agriculture and manufacturing over the twentieth century.[1]

Although mining in the region had a long history in pre-colonial Africa, it was the discovery of significant diamond deposits in Griqualand West in 1867, and the vast goldfields in the Transvaal in 1886, that unleashed a process that transformed the southern African landscape. The region moved from being viewed as an agricultural backwater, of only limited interest to the world's financial and political superpowers, to a territory of vital importance to the global economy. South Africa's economy developed quickly, powered by mining and rapid urbanisation, and reliant on an extensive migrant labor network from the region. The colonial occupation of Zimbabwe was driven by the hopes of finding a 'second rand', goldfields similar to those found on the Witwatersrand outside Johannesburg. These deposits never materialised, however, and commercial farming established itself as the cornerstone of the Zimbabwean economy after the Second World War, particularly due to the growing success of large-scale tobacco farming. However, in addition to internal developments, colonial Zimbabwe had to contend with the pressures of international sanctions following the unilateral declaration of independence by a white-minority settler regime in November 1965. Consequently, by the time the country gained independence under majority rule in 1980, Zimbabwe had significantly diversified its economy. It was the second most industrialised country on the continent, after South Africa. Zambia, on the other hand, had a very different economy, as it was primarily dependent on its mining base. Copper production, and impressive rates of urbanisation, radically changed Zambia's economic fortunes from the 1950s to the 1970s.

After independence, there were continuities and changes, challenges and successes in the economic performance of each of these countries. Each, however, struggled with economic downturn in the 1980s and 1990s, which resulted in dramatic changes in the work and livelihoods of their economically active populations. New forms of work and migration emerged, and the growing importance of the informal economy increased as the formal economy struggled. Perhaps understandably, existing scholarship on labor and the working experiences in these countries has mostly focused on the individual countries' key industries. To this end, the importance and significance of mining has been exhaustively studied in

Zambia. Zimbabwe has an impressive scholarship on farm labor, but also a number of studies on the urban labor force and mine work in the territory. South Africa, however, has a much more developed labor historiography. While much of this has focused on mine workers, there is also a large literature on farm workers and rural labor systems, as well as urban labor in the factories and cities. This is not only because the South African economy is, and was, larger and more dominant, it also reflects that South Africa had had a much more established research culture and university network that has allowed this field to develop.

The Evolution of Labor History in Southern Africa

The development of labor history in southern Africa has been underpinned by two central tenets. The first is that the systems of political and economic control that developed in the region, fundamentally hinged on the exploitation of labor. The accumulation of capital by the elite necessitated the creation of a class of waged laborers who were extracted from the rural peasantry (but not necessarily removed from it). Colonial rule created compulsory labor systems that ensured white owned mines, farms, factories, and households had access to labor in ways that did not fit the 'conventional' theories of the creation of 'free labor'.[2] Secondly, there was a growing interest in how those who found themselves part of these new labor forces resisted the system and organised themselves. Although the system was repressive, African workers still found space to express their agency and developed forms of political consciousness that saw them become key actors in the struggles against colonial rule. Unions and labor strikes were beacons of evolving awareness on the part of workers who were confronted with a myriad of restrictions and impediments to economic gain, as well as other forms of political, economic, and social freedom.

Labor history in the region had its heyday in the 1960s and 1980s. Various waves of decolonisation, and the opening up of space, archives, and records, as well as the ability to directly access voices and lived experiences from the continent, has since provided an impetus for revisionist histories to further explore the lives of workers in Africa. Across the globe, studies into the working classes enjoyed a boon over this period, 'driven by the extraordinary waves of industrial militancy in the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Poland, Brazil, Argentina, India and many other countries during those years.'[3] However, during the 1990s, academia became an inhospitable place for labor studies. As Bonner, Hyslop, and Van Der Walt have summarized, the political defeat of many labor movements, and the shrinking of the industrial labour force, plus 'the emergence of new forms of global flows of capital, and new patterns of

production and consumption, all put question marks over any triumphalism about the cause of labour'.[4]

In southern Africa, the effect of this change in focus was pronounced, and the production of labor histories declined rapidly. After political liberation in southern Africa, a range of new and important research agendas emerged in the region. Zimbabwe, for instance, saw three important commission studies of the labor movement that sought to write workers into the history of the country.[5] Subaltern histories became vogue, and a host of new works explored the meaningful interactions between historical process and identity, race, gender, and social formation. There were, however, still important works on the role and place of labor in the colonial and post-colonial state, particularly in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Zambia. There has also been a growing recognition that there are limits to exploring labor history purely through the lens of the nation state. In southern Africa in particular, the shared histories and extensive migrant labor systems mean that a transnational lens is needed to grasp a fuller picture of the development of labor systems in the region.[6] It is vital to understand the legacies of regional integration, and the transnational processes of labor and labor migration. Much of the economically active population of southern Africa were active in regional economic activities, not national ones, and it is important to be cognisant of their roles and activities changed over time.

Large scale labor migration in southern Africa began in the late nineteenth century, driven by the discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa. Thousands of migrant workers from neighbouring countries, including Malawi and Mozambique, flocked to South Africa to work in the mines, but also started to take up working opportunities on farms and in urban centres. This early migration was largely informal, with workers traveling on their own or through recruitment agencies. As these industries grew, and South Africa and Southern Rhodesia became larger and more diversified economies, labor migration became more formalized, with colonial administrations in Malawi and Mozambique signing agreements with the South African government to supply labour to the mines. The Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) was established in 1900 to recruit and manage migrant labour from neighbouring countries. Malawi and Mozambique became major suppliers of labor to South Africa, with thousands of workers migrating to work in the mines, farms, and industries. Over this period, many migrants went to Southern Rhodesia, while many Africans from Southern Rhodesia ventured to South Africa. Thus Southern Rhodesia was both a receiver and exporter

of migrant labor, highlighting the complex reasons for why and how people entered into the migrant labor system.[7]

After the Second World War, labor migration in Southern Africa continued to grow, driven by the expansion of the mining industry and the growth of secondary industries in South Africa. Malawi and Mozambique remained major suppliers of labor, with the South African government and mining companies actively recruiting workers from these countries. However, during the apartheid era, labor migration in Southern Africa became increasingly politicized. The South African government imposed strict controls on labor migration, including the use of passports, visas, and work permits. Malawi and Mozambique continued to supply labor to South Africa. At its height, over 160,000 migrants were travelling to South Africa every year from Mozambique, but the conditions of work and the treatment of migrant workers remained problematic.[8] In the 1950s, there were over 600,000 labor migrants from across the region living and working in South Africa.[9] Migration (labor, economic, or otherwise) still has a significant impact on the region.[10] The historical configurations of employment, occupational structures and labor migration still have important ramifications on current labor trends in the region. A broad range of social movements and labor organisations are currently championing causes that stem from labor injustices of the past. For instance, the labor unrest on mines across South Africa, as highlighted by the Marikana massacre of 2012, which resulted in the deaths of 44 people and which has been described as the deadliest use of force by South African police against civilians since the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March 1960.[11] This event was indicative of the state of labor relations on mining operations whose roots lie in the colonial era, and whose labour practices have changed little since 1994. The recurring xenophobic attacks on migrants in townships across South Africa are also linked to histories of labour migration so entrenched in the region. These events clearly highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the historical dimensions of these labour dynamics if the contemporary region is to be understood.

It is clear that the countries analysed here have shared and interconnected pasts. Their joint exposure to British imperialism and regional migrant labor networks bound them closely into a shared economic and social system. The new regional economy had our key sectors for waged employees: mines and mine workers, farm and farm laborers; the new forms of work found in the growing urban centres, and the rise of the ‘informal’ economy. All of these spheres have their own bodies of literature and it would be impossible to cite everything in the space allowed.

Mines and Mine Workers

South Africa

The discovery of large-scale deposits of diamonds and gold in the latter half of the nineteenth century ushered in a fundamental change in labor processes in the southern African region. Mining capital was fundamental in driving urbanisation and subsequent ancillary occupations in the region. Although fewer workers are employed in mining today, it remains an important contributor to the economy of the region. The Witwatersrand gold reef in the South African Republic spanned some 40 miles, from Randfontein in the west to Modderfontein in the east. After the discovery of gold in 1886, it was soon realised that the richest deposits were located deep underground. The pyritic rock encasing the gold required increasingly sophisticated and expensive plant to recover the maximum percentage of the precious metal. As a result, overhead costs were high and privileged large-scale operations.[12] At the end of the nineteenth century, the South African Republic was still a largely pastoral economy so most heavy equipment had to be imported. As the price of gold was fixed on the international markets profits could only be increased if costs were reduced. The mining industry was subsequently particularly exposed to periods of boom and bust. Consequently, when faced with economic trouble, the mining industry often sought the support of the state. Labor costs provided an expense that could potentially be controlled so following the 1895-96 boom the mining companies attempted to reduce African wages, and asked the state to introduce a pass law to control desertion.[13] Similar tactics were employed following the end of another stock market boom in 1903-4 when the mining industry obtained state support for the control of its Chinese labor force.[14] The fixed price of gold increased the incentive of individual mining companies to cooperate to control costs and subsequently the Chamber of Mines was created in 1889 and given the role of regulating the wages paid to African workers. It also engaged in labor recruitment across southern Africa.[15]

Although the cost of labor provided an opportunity for cost-cutting, the mining industry was faced with two main problems. The first, was the reliance on skilled European labor to successfully exploit the deep level deposits. Demand was high for skilled miners and the Witwatersrand mines had to compete with similar enterprises in Australia and North America. Consequently, where possible, processes were introduced that could exploit cheap, unskilled African labor. In doing so, it created a racially divided labor pool.[16] Although many Afrikaners had owned claims and possessed diggers licenses in the early years of the gold discoveries, the

reorganisation of the industry after 1889 precluded many from the industry. Afrikaners did, however, enter the mining industry during periods of industrial unrest and when technology had undermined the value of skilled work to a level when they could be employed as overseers of unskilled African labor.[17]

By 1894 white workers amounted to 11.05 per cent of the total workforce of 92,806. Despite their comparatively low numbers, white labor amounted to 28.39 per cent of all working costs, African labor in the same year comprised only 25.05 per cent of costs. This underlines the desirability of the mining industry to limit the number of white workers. Initially, a greater proportion of white labor was employed underground, rather than on the surface, which points to the highly technical nature of skilled shaft sinking. This changed as the deep levels became working mines and white labor moved back above ground.[18] African underground labor always accounted for more workers than surface labor, increasing at twice the rate than surface labor after 1907. In terms of the total African labor force employed on the Witwatersrand, the number grew from 15,000 in 1890; to 69.127 in 1897. By 1907 African employment had reached 105,027 and rose to 189,253 in 1912.[19] From the very beginning, however, the mining industry had sought to reduce its reliance on white labor through technological advance. Changes in rock drilling practices had seen white miners increasingly moved to supervise teams of African labor, rather than operate the machinery themselves. This can also be seen with other extraction processes, with white engine drivers and machine operators increasingly moving to supervisory roles.[20] This had the effect of stabilising the definition of skilled work by recognising the economic and political power held by the white working class and formally diverging the interests of white and African labor.[21]

African labor was predominantly sourced through the regional migrant labor system.[22] Present day Mozambique was the most important area of recruitment, providing at least 47 per cent of African labor employed in the Transvaal mining industry.[23] Labor supply was a perennial concern. 1907 saw the formation of the Government Native Labour Bureau in 1907 and the passage of the Native Labour Regulation Act of 1911.[24] Despite the large amount of migrant labor, it was not enough to satisfy the needs of the mining industry. Africans in the Eastern Cape, Natal and Zululand were all recruited with single male laborers drawn to the mines.

Neither African nor white labor conceded passively to the mining industry's desire for low-cost labor, although the material differences in experience led to different reactions. Although

the Kimberley closed compound system was not universally adopted on the Witwatersrand, African laborers did tend to be housed in compounds. Consequently, any resistance to mine management policies tended to be enacted at the mines.[25] African resistance often took the form of desertion, or covertly working slowly. On occasion open resistance flared up. When the Chamber of Mines tried to enforce a 14.2 per cent pay cut to African wages in 1890, African workers blew up the Anglo-Tharsis mine manager's house with dynamite.[26]

By 1910, when the Union of South Africa was created, South Africa produced a third of the world's gold output. This increased to more than half by 1930. Mining accounted for 22 per cent of South Africa's national income, overtaking agriculture.[27] The mines employed fewer workers than agriculture, but did serve to stimulate growth in many other sectors, such as timber, food, and transport.[28] Although economic growth in South Africa during the 1920s was somewhat stilted, it managed to navigate the Great Depression a little easier than most major world economies as the demand for gold was unaffected. The increase of the global dollar price of gold in 1934 raised the profitability of South African gold considerably. Growing revenue from taxation saw the South African government increase its investment in the local economy. As a result, total industrial employment rose from 555,000 to 929,000 between 1932 and 1934. Gold production also managed to expand during the Second World War.[29] The importance of the mining sector for labour remained consistent in the post-war years. By the 1970s, however, the mining sector began to "stabilize" its workforce through the employment of a smaller number of higher skilled African workers on long-term contracts, replacing the larger number of less-skilled workers who might dip in and out of employment in the sector. This change restricted employment opportunities for low skilled African workers.[30]

Zambia

Initially, the prospects of large-scale mining on the Zambian Copperbelt looked unpromising, especially compared to the neighbouring Katanga region of the Belgian Congo. This changed in the 1920s as scientific developments made the economic exploitation of the large, if comparatively poor-grade, copper deposits in the country viable. By the end of the decade there were five major mining centres under development: Bwana Mkubwa, Roan Antelope, Mufulira, Nkana, and Nchanga. Two major mining companies controlled their development, Rhodesian Anglo American and the Rhodesia Selection Trust (RST). The former was part of the South African conglomerate Anglo American while the latter was controlled by American and British capital. Low labor costs were critical to the development of the Copperbelt. In part,

this was to compensate for the high costs involved in the exploitation of geographically inconvenient locations.[31] Like the South African mines, the development of the Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt was predicated on access to migratory labor from the surrounding region. This was a relatively inefficient approach given the recurring costs incurred by the mining industry in terms of recruitment, transportation, and the need to provide housing and food.[32] It was made possible through the low wages paid to African workers. White labor, on the other hand, could demand significantly higher wages than could be earned in more developed regions of the world. Consequently, Sir Ronald Prain, chairman of the RST, could conclude by the late 1950s that 'the problem was not that black workers were paid too little, but that white workers were paid too much'.[33]

During the initial administration of British South Africa Company (BSAC), the primary role of Northern Rhodesia was to provide labor for the mines of Katanga and Southern Rhodesia. The implementation of a Hut Tax (1898) was intended to encourage workers to migrate south to address labor shortages in Southern Rhodesia.[34] Alongside taxation, the BSAC often resorted to the destruction of food supplies and hut burning to ensure that Africans had no alternative but to engage with wage labor.[35] Initially, the Copperbelt satisfied its labor needs primarily from within Northern Rhodesia, plus recruits from neighbouring colonies. Its earlier exposure to the regional migrant labour system provided an existing local workforce with mining experience. These workers however, sought and expected the economic and social advantages that they had experienced elsewhere.[36] This underlines that the African workforce was far from passive, they possessed the ability to choose between different employers which played to the advantages of the mining sector as it was able to offer better terms than other sectors of the economy.[37] For instance, a random survey of 42 African men employed at Nkana Mine in 1937 found that 18 had worked in Southern Rhodesia, 14 in Belgian Congo, 5 in South Africa, 5 in Tanganyika, and only 15 had worked in Northern Rhodesia alone.[38]

Other sectors of the economy such as the railways, the construction industry and government employment followed highly restrictive labor practices. The mining sector did at least offer the limited opportunity for African labor to make some progress, for example as instructors, and there was strong demand for African labor.[39] Employment in the mining sector grew rapidly from the late 1920s. In 1927 there were 8,000 people employed on the Copperbelt and this number almost tripled by 1930. This included 22,000 African workers which represented a third of all Africans employed in Northern Rhodesia at that time.[40]

The expansion of the Northern Rhodesian mining industry took place in the context of a worldwide economic depression. This drove important changes to the broad pattern of labor relations in the area. The Depression led to large numbers of miners becoming unemployed in both Katanga and Southern Rhodesia. This had the effect of creating a skilled labor reserve that negated the earlier concerns surrounding the cost of labor for the Copperbelt. Given it was now possible to attract labor at a lower price than anticipated the need for greater mechanisation now seemed irrelevant. Eventually, however, the Depression led to large-scale redundancies after 1931 that saw a contraction in the population of the Copperbelt. Between November 1930 and June 1933 the number of Europeans fell from 3,600 to 1,200 while, even more dramatically, the number of Africans fell from 32,000 to 9,300. African employment was not to recover until 1938.[41]

In 1935 protests erupted on the Copperbelt as the colonial government attempted to introduce a more equitable taxation regime between rural and urban populations. To encourage Africans to move back into the rural areas the decision was made to raise taxation levels on the Copperbelt by 50 per cent. Taxation rates in the rural areas, however, were cut by 25 per cent.[42] This change took place against the backdrop of existing African discontent with working conditions and, after demonstrations turned violent, police shot and killed six striking miners at Roan Antelope and injured seventeen. Little effective action was taken to address African grievances, not least as large-scale African unemployment continued to provide the mining companies with a labor reserve. The reliance of the colonial government on the mining industry as a source of income placed it in a rather awkward position if it wished to pursue policies towards African labor which went against the best interests of the mining companies.[43]

Labor moved towards unionisation on the Copperbelt in 1936 with the foundation by white workers of the Northern Rhodesian Mine Workers Union (NRMWU).[44] The Union was formed in the context of expanded training of African mine workers to perform skilled jobs performed by white workers and was officially recognised in 1937 after the Colonial Office requested that the mining companies recognise the Union once it could claim a membership of 55 per cent of white workers. Consequently, the NRMWU was officially recognised in September 1937. One proviso required by the mining companies was that the union should represent white workers only. Given the racist attitudes of many NRMWU members this requirement was easy to meet. The Union insisted on the principle of ‘equal pay for equal work’ which had been used

effectively in the South African mines to prevent competition from African workers. African workers on the Copperbelt were paid at significantly lower levels than European workers and the mining companies would not pay Africans at the same rate as Europeans given the large number of workers who would be prepared to work for less. The paranoia of the European miners on this issue was exacerbated by the situation across the border in Katanga where the mining companies employed Africans in skilled positions at wage rates far lower than they would pay to Europeans.[45]

During the early stages of the Second World War the Copperbelt struggled to meet the production targets required by the Ministry of Supply. During this period there was the constant threat of labor unrest as the spectre of food shortages loomed large.[46] An increase in the cost of living proved a catalyst for the NRMWU in their campaign for a higher rate of pay. Strikes broke out at Mufulira and Nkana in March 1940 with strikers demanding a pay rise of five per cent, improved overtime rates, housing, and a request for the government to investigate silicosis. The strikes took the government by surprise and the white mineworkers achieved most of their demands. African workers had also seen their working conditions deteriorate since the Depression and had not received any pay increase since the start of the War. Perhaps buoyed by the success of their European counterparts, on 28 March 1940 15,000 African workers went on strike. The response from the government was, however, markedly different. 13 Africans were killed, and 71 wounded and the strike action subsequently dissipated.[47]

The 1940 strikes laid bare the foundations of Copperbelt labor relations: the disparity between African and European wages and the racist underpinning of the color bar. A Commission of Enquiry chaired by Sir John Foster suggested that many Africans saw themselves as permanent residents of the Copperbelt and resented the restrictive nature of the color bar on their employment opportunities. African wages were, in real terms, lower than they had been during the development of the Copperbelt and living conditions had also deteriorated. The mining companies also resisted the idea of the creation of African unions, although in 1942 a concession was made with the introduction of ‘boss boys’ committees where senior Africans who supervised groups of workers could meet. African mineworkers themselves increasingly embraced welfare associations as a practical, if limited, way to articulate their grievances and these associations would become the focus for early African political activity.[48]

The stabilisation of labor remained a key issue during the War. By 1944 there was a *de facto* recognition of the realities of African residency on the Copperbelt by the Northern Rhodesian government. The government sponsored Saffery Report (1943) had recommended that stabilisation should be accepted as general policy on the Copperbelt. Both the Northern Rhodesian government and the mining companies were concerned that this recommendation went too far and the report was initially suppressed by the colonial government. They feared that any improvement in African social services on the Copperbelt would have the effect of acting as a further driver of stabilisation.[49]

Labor costs became one of the key issues in the post-war period, becoming significantly more expensive with European costs growing by 30 per cent and African costs rising by 25 per cent since 1939. European workers' negotiating position had been strengthened by wartime manpower shortages while the stabilisation of African workers on the Copperbelt had also strengthened their bargaining position.[50] One key change during the War was that the cost of producing copper in colonial Zambia had increased compared to its competitors, and this became a persistent worry for the mining companies. These worries were exacerbated by the formation of the African Mine Workers Union (AMWU) in 1949, which soon emerged as a powerful and well-organised body that won a series of wage increases for African mineworkers through major strikes in the 1950s.

Mining wages and employment both increased as a result of a boom in the copper industry, as developing Cold War tensions fuelled the demand for strategic materials such as copper. The AMWU often couched their demands to see material benefit from these profits with questions of accountability and ideas around self-government. Control of mineral resources was a key factor in African resistance to the imposition of the Central African Federation, however mine workers resisted any attempt to subsume their union into the wider nationalist cause.

During the final years of the Central African Federation there was clear tension between the nationalist United National Independence Party (UNIP) and the mining unions as the former unsuccessfully tried to gain control of the latter.[51] This set the scene for the immediate post-independence period as African mineworkers clashed with UNIP while trying to improve their own material positions. The newly independent government argued that it needed copper revenues for economic development while the African mineworkers saw independence as an opportunity to finally secure better conditions. Consequently, independence saw the mining

companies combine with the postcolonial state in an attempt to suppress the demands of mine workers.[52] This backfired in 1966 when the union accepted an unpopular pay deal with the mining companies. In response, grassroots mineworkers organised unofficial strikes that crippled the Copperbelt. A subsequent Commission of Inquiry recommended a 22 per cent pay increase which would bring African salaries to a level equivalent to two-thirds of European mineworkers.

In an attempt to rein in the independent nature of the mineworkers the government merged existing trades unions into the new Mineworkers Union of Zambia (MUZ). Mineworkers failed to be convinced by the idea of nationalised industrial relations, but grassroots opposition was effectively ended by the declaration of a one-party state in 1972. Industrial action was finally curtailed with the decline of the price of copper in the mid-1970s. Workers realised that the parlous financial state of the mining industry would result in the inability of the government to meet any further wage increase claims. UNIP cast its clashes with the mineworkers as in the national interest and in the early 1980s further reduced the revenue spent on Copperbelt communities.

In the context of a one-party state, organised labor on the Copperbelt increasingly came to represent the opposition to the UNIP government. The leaders of the Zambian Congress of Trades Unions (ZCTU), Newstead Zimba and Frederick Chiluba consistently declared their support for UNIP but reserved the right to offer public comment on industrial matters. The 1980s saw further economic decline and the imposition of structural adjustment programmes by the International Monetary Fund. By December 1989 Chiluba publicly proclaimed that Zambia should return to multiparty democracy. President Kenneth Kaunda conceded to a referendum on the issue and the Copperbelt provided the location for the first campaign meetings for a new group that would become the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD). In the subsequent 1991 elections mineworkers overwhelmingly backed the MMD which won power and installed Chiluba as president. The removal of UNIP did not signify an end to the clashes between mining labour and government. Amendments were made to labour legislation in 1993 and 1997 that removed the ZCTU's legal monopoly over union membership. Job cuts on the Copperbelt continued and by the early twenty-first century MUZ could only claim a membership of 15,600, down from a peak of 60,000 in the late 1980s.[53]

Mining is, and clearly was, a very important labour sector in Zambia. However, in Zimbabwe mining consistently employed more workers than Zambia, but the Zimbabwean mines were in rural settings with few of the links to the 'industrialisation' and urbanisation found in Zambia and South Africa. The number of miners in Zimbabwe grew rapidly from 41,000 in 1931 to 88,000 in 1941 and then fell to 63,000 in 1956. By 1969, this number was down to 48,000. In Zambia mining employment never exceeded 65,000 (in 1990) and in 1950s and 1960s, there were between 45,000 and 50,000 miners employed on the Copperbelt. In terms of share of the waged economy, mining constituted 17 per cent in 1951, 15 per cent in 1956 and 17 percent in 1961. This percentage fell in the 1980s and 1990s due to the economic crises in Zambia. The vast majority of Zambians had to find livelihoods and incomes outside of the mining economy. As the next section will illustrate, agriculture is and was the main labour activity for most Africans in Zambia before, during and after the twentieth century.

Zimbabwe

The desire to exploit the fabled "Second Rand" on the Zimbabwean plateau had propelled the British South Africa Company into the region in 1890, however significant gold deposits failed to materialise. But, over the first two decades of occupation many smaller mining operations took root and the industry began to grow. Southern Rhodesia's mines lacked the geographical concentration of the Witwatersrand, and therefore African labour did not provide the same real or imagined threat to the settler community.[54] By 1911 mining was by far the largest employer in the colony, however it would subsequently be replaced by agriculture as the major employer across the twentieth century.[55]

Labor shortages plagued the mining sector during the Chartered Company's administration of the territory. This necessitated a high degree of collaboration between the mining industry and the state which continued throughout the colonial period.[56] The Southern Rhodesian mining industry faced the problem of having to compete with the regional mining industry. Both African and European workers could attain higher wages and enjoy access to better healthcare, food and consumer goods at the mines in South Africa. Safety standards in Southern Rhodesia were also inferior which affected the industry's ability to recruit.[57] The Rhodesia Native Labour Bureau was created in 1903 in an attempt to stabilize and increase the supply of labor.[58] Given remuneration on offer was significantly lower for a worker than they could have attracted as an individual, the RNLB only appealed to the most precarious workers in the labor market, principally those who lived the furthest distance away from the mines. Mines developed

alongside the region's migrant labor system and the *Chibaro* system was used by employers to undercut local Ndebele and Shona labour. This saw workers employed on fixed contracts and they faced imprisonment if they failed to fulfil their obligations. Working conditions were further shaped by the use of mining compounds to further impose the desires of employers on their labour force.[59] Compounds in Southern Rhodesia tended to be more 'open' in comparison to those in South Africa, which may be a consequence of the less concentrated nature of the mining industry.[60] African workers could and did resist these controls through desertion and consequently pass laws were introduced, in part to coerce African labor. The Southern Rhodesian state lacked the ability to rigorously enforce the pass laws, however, which provided workers with more ability for evasion than they would have found in South Africa.[61]

Despite the poor working conditions on Southern Rhodesia's mines, it possessed one advantage over the Witwatersrand: it did not have significant competition for labor from the manufacturing industry. Despite its harsh nature, the mining industry in Southern Rhodesia remained the best option for workers in the domestic labor market.[62] While gold mining never quite lived up to expectations over the first decades of the twentieth century, the mining industry's fortunes improved through the increased demand for coal from the rapidly developing Northern Rhodesian Copperbelt after 1933.[63] The Second World War saw Southern Rhodesia's mining labor affected as restrictions were placed on the region's migrant labor system. Nyasaland, the primary recruitment ground for the colony suspended labor migration on several occasions from the outbreak of war to 1942 to ensure it could meet its own recruitment targets for the Kings African Rifles. Attempts were made to mitigate this shortage through the recruitment of more labour from Mozambique.[64] As the wages on offer in the mines were comparatively high compared to those a labourer could earn in agriculture labor shortages were largely abrogated in the mining sector. Southern Rhodesia's chrome mining industry expanded significantly during the War due to its importance to the Allied war effort, increasing to 600,000 tons per annum by 1945.[65] Following the end of the War, the Southern Rhodesian mining industry continued to expand, with chrome retaining a crucial place in Cold War stockpiling. Coal, steel and pig iron all found markets both internally and externally and over £7 million of gold was produced in 1964.[66] This growth was stymied, however, with the decision by the Southern Rhodesian government to declare a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in November 1965. This led to economic sanctions, limiting potential export markets.

The effect of economic sanctions on the mining industry was mixed. For instance, the embargo placed on asbestos was easily circumvented. The British company Turner and Newell controlled asbestos production in Southern Rhodesia and shipped their product to South Africa where it was subsequently marketed as a South African product. Consequently, asbestos production in Rhodesia grew from 187,000 tons in 1970 to 259,000 tons in 1979.[67] UDI did, however, affect mining companies' access to skilled labor and the 1970s saw the introduction of greater mechanisation and the introduction of a category of 'semi-skilled occupations'. This resulted in African workers occupying roles that had previously been reserved for European miners. Consequently, semi-skilled mining roles grew from 4,000 in 1961 to 14,071 in 1974. African labor was still considered as 'cheap' by employers as the total wage bill of African labour fell as a percentage of gross output from 19.7 per cent 14.8 per cent in 1968 to 14.8 per cent in 1972.[68]

Independence in 1980 saw the new government reorganise the mining industry in an attempt to re-shape the colonial labour model. A key part of this was the creation of the Zimbabwean Mining Development Corporation with a mandate to increase state participation in both new ventures and existing mines. Upon independence 90 per cent of the mining industry in the country was owned by multinational companies.[69] In the main, large-scale nationalisation of the mining industry did not take place. Instead mines threatened with closure were acquired by the state. A notable exception to this rule was the colliery at Hwange (Wankie) where the government acquired a controlling interest to pursue its policy of energy security. Labor regulations began to be reformed through the Conditions of Service Regulation (1981) which repealed many of the colonial era labor laws. During the same year a minimum wage was introduced for mine labour, further improving remuneration for African labor. Reform continued into the decade with the introduction of the Labour Act (1985), this again removed discriminatory legislation and gave African workers the full rights of 'employees' which had previously been reserved for European workers. Aspects of the Act did, however, attract criticism from both unions and mine management as it provided the government with the power to set hours of work, wages, leave and other conditions of employment.[70]

The reforms to the mining industry unfortunately took place against a worsening economic situation in Zimbabwe. International mineral prices had fallen for the first time in fifteen years during 1981 which, combined with the droughts that Zimbabwe endured between 1982 and 1984, led to the newly independent government facing its first financial crisis. This was

assuaged by International Monetary Fund loans in 1981 and 1983 and the economy had bounced back to enjoy GDP growth of 5.3 per cent from 1985-1991.[71] The reforms introduced in the 1980s transformed worker relations and strengthened trades unions. There would eventually be further financial pressures on Zimbabwe and the introduction of economic structural adjustment programmes (ESAP) that would bring labour into conflict with the government. Attempts to reform mining labor conditions ended with the introduction of ESAP. This saw some aspects of the Labour Act reformed and by the end of the century mining wages remained low.[72] Consequently, by the end of the 1990s the introduction of majority rule had made little difference to the working conditions of mining labor.[73]

Agriculture and Farm Labour

South Africa

Agricultural practices and relations changed as the settler presence in South Africa began to extend its influence into the interior of the continent. There has been much debate about how these changes came about, the effect this had on pre-capitalist forms of agricultural organisation, and the new relations African populations had to navigate on the farms, plantations, and land holdings of the new white owners who claimed that land. In South Africa, investigation into agrarian labor is usually divided into four periods: pre-1913; 1913 to 1948; and 1948 to 1994, and 1994 to the present. In 1913 the South African state passed the Native Land Act, which was the first piece of legislation that sought to legalize the separation of whites and Africans by territory. In 1948, the National Party was elected into power, and this was the formalisation of the Apartheid. In 1994, the country held its first democratic elections, which ushered in the African National Congress, and the end of settler rule in the country. These neat periodizations elide many of the continuities that existed in the lived realities of farm laborers and agricultural workers, but are none-the-less useful markers in understanding the scholarship. A comprehensive account of all these periods is not possible here – there is a vast scholarship and many intricate debates. However, we will highlight a few key points from the South African case.

After the mineral revolution there was a dramatic rise in the demand for labor from the Witwatersrand. As a result, competition emerged between farmers and mine owners for control of that labor. Farmers were constantly afraid that the better wages on offer on the Rand, would draw labor away from rural areas and unfairly prejudice agricultural production. Much of the state's focus in the pre-1913 period (and beyond) was how to create 'native labor' – push

Africans into the wage economy and remove their ability to survive outside of the new state structures. The conflict between farmers and miners also created the 'gold and maize' nexus.[74] The state was aware of the needs of both industries, which at that stage were the primary economic sectors of the economy. The state sought to find ways to balance the labor needs of both sides, as landowners and mine magnates were important political allies. As such, the state went to great lengths to ensure that the control and supply of labor serviced both industries, but also complied with the state policies of segregation. Migrant labor became an important source of labor, which the state actively encouraged and supported.

Much of the early work on labor in South Africa focused on mine workers and the growing urban areas. However, in the 1970s, the rise of Marxist oriented scholarship saw an uptick in rural labor issues. The focus of this work was on how the state employed its resources to manipulate and control rural black populations, and they were often at the mercy of white landowners who wielded all the power.[75] However, as noted in the introduction, there were many keen debates over the power of the state (and its limits), and the agency of rural populations. For example, in the 1970s, Mike Morris argued that pre-capitalist forms of agriculture were extinguished in the inter-war years, and that capitalist forms of production had taken over.[76] This assertion produced a backlash, as a range of authors such as William Beinart, made the case for the great deal of complexity and variety in agricultural relations still present in South Africa during this period.[77] This discussion propelled a growing interest into the rural labor question and the historiography grew in the late 1970s and 1980s.

After the 1913 Native Land Act, the commercial farming sector started to expand rapidly. Indeed, by the 1940s, the value of agricultural output had overtaken that of gold. This growth necessitated a rise in the agricultural labour force. Duncan, in his *The Mills of God: The State and African Labour in South Africa, 1918-1948,* provided a comprehensive overview of the policy measures undertaken by the South African state towards farm laborers up to 1948.[78] In 1997 Jeeves and Crush also produced an edited collection focused on the period between 1913 and 1948, which is a seminal text and one of the most important contributions to the historiography of farm labor in South Africa.[79] This collection highlighted the plight many farm workers faced on commercial farms in South Africa. The collective weight of state policies and the racial segregation of land and land ownership undermined many rural populations and entwined them in systems of poverty that were often all encompassing. The long-term ramifications of rural poverty present in South Africa are a direct result of this period.

No book illustrates the travails black South Africans had to navigate in South Africa better than Charles van Onselen's *The Seed is Mine: The Life of Kas Maine, a South African Sharecropper, 1845-1985*.[80] In *The Seed is Mine*, van Onselen illuminates the social and economic relations on the South Africa Highveld, and how African families and sharecroppers sought to navigate the racial politics and policies of the time. The lives of rural Africans were fundamentally transformed by the national policies enacted before 1994 that sought to control labor supplies and labour provision. *The Seed Is Mine* was different to much of the work that preceded it. As Freund noted, *The Seed is Mine* could be seen as a quintessential South African story, which outlined in rich detail the social and racial relations that prevailed on white owned farms on the South African Highveld.[81]

A central theme in *The Seed is Mine*, was the sense of ownership that arises from the white farmer's possession and control of the land. In these rural farms, Afrikaners were able to say that the black man owned nothing. Indeed, the paternalist extremities of this view identified that the black man belonged to the white man. For van Onselen, 'Shorn of its Sunday finery, paternalism wore the undergarments of autocracy', and for all its 'many virtues in a harsh environment, paternalism was predicated of a structured inequality that required the perpetual adolescence of the junior partner'.[82] As a result, much of the white farming discourse on their black labor was infused with a problematic racialized paternalism. Much of this language still permeates present land debates in Zimbabwe and South Africa.[83] The post-1994 literature into farm labour has explored the continued struggles of farm workers and the failures of the ANC government to fundamentally change the lived experiences of many rural South Africans.

Zimbabwe

Much of the literature on farm and agricultural labour in Zimbabwe fits into the discourse of control and manipulation, and agency and resistance. The fact that settler dominated commercial agriculture became the bedrock of the Zimbabwean economy during the twentieth century paved the way for this manifestation in the literature. Crucially, the expansion of settler agriculture was brought about by 'non-market' mechanisms. For Charles van Onselen, those mechanism were essentially semi-feudal relations of production (long working hours for extremely low wages) that ensured 'large enough supplies of quasi-slave, *chibaro* [slave] labor had been mobilized to undercut Ndebele and Shona peasant producers'.[84]

In addition to these measures, tactics employed elsewhere in Africa were introduced to force African workers into the labor economy and more land was alienated for white settlement. To this end, reserves were created for African populations, usually remote and far from available markets. These areas were generally located in places of poorer soils and lower rainfall. As white landowners turned towards agricultural production, African tenants were given notice and pushed into the reserves. By the late 1920s, many of these rural locations were already overcrowded and overstocked. In addition, a host of enforced taxes only payable in cash, forced growing numbers of Africans to sell their labor at rates more or less set by colonial capitalism.[85] From the 1930s to the 1950s, Hodder Williams has shown that the 'the cumulative impact of legislation, agricultural practices, and enhanced security of livelihood for the whites in fact provided a framework for economic and social relations which the post-war years merely embellished and strengthened'.[86] African political and economic liberties were therefore consistently undermined in order to serve the settler community. As the number of white post-Second World War immigrants increased from 80,000 in 1946 to 135,000 in 1951, this resulted in further displacement of rural Africans as previously unsold land was taken up by new settlers. These developments further curbed peasant agriculture, undermining rural African incomes and self-sufficiency.[87]

European farming expanded significantly in terms of output and acreage under cultivation from the 1930s. With such expansion in this sector, it is unsurprising that the labor demands of commercial farms grew continuously throughout the early colonial period confirms patterns identified by Arrghi and Mosely.[88] The number of laborers on commercial farms grew from 13,500 in 1911 to 58,000 in 1921, to 102,000 in 1941. By the early 1950s, over 200,000 Africans were reported to be working on white commercial farms.[89] Wages on commercial farms remained low, and Johnston has shown that the state was a crucial player in forcing Africans into wage labor. The adoption of migrant labor averted critical shortages of agricultural labor during the post-Second World War boom. The ability to attract migrant laborers was that the average wage rate in Southern Rhodesia was significantly higher than in Mozambique and Malawi, where most migrants were from.[90] Migrants made an important contribution to the labor needs of commercial agriculture from the 1940s to the 1960s.

After independence, labor relations remained a highly charged and contentious issue in the commercial farming sector. Along with general messages of reconciliation and peace by the new leader, Robert Mugabe, expressly told white farmers the future of Zimbabwe depended on

their continued production and export earnings. Yet, farmers also faced accusations that they mistreated their laborers, provided little in terms of social welfare or development, and that their colonial attitudes would not be tolerated. Under majority rule workers across the country soon moved for improved salaries and working conditions. The government responded by introducing mandatory minimum wages. This exacerbated friction between farmers and farm workers, and many farmers, confronted by new labor laws, minimum wages, and increased scrutiny from the state, found the post-independence years very stressful. Employment on commercial farms fell in the 1980s from 314,000 workers recorded in the sector in 1977, to only 247,000 in 1984. While the total number employed rose to over 300,000 in 1992, the percentage of permanent workers fell significantly.

The Economic and Structural Adjustment Program (ESAP) adopted by the Zimbabwean government in the early 1990s, had disastrous effects on the economy as a whole, but had specific impacts on farm workers. The emphasis on liberalisation and enhanced foreign income or export-generation resulted in many farmers moving into new areas such as horticulture and flowers and other less labour-intensive operations. Farmers moved away from producing land hungry but less lucrative crops such as grains. This was reflected in the land use figures. In 1980 land under grain crop cultivation was 270,000 hectares. This fell to a low of 154,000 in 1992, before recovering to 190,000 in 1999.[91] This represented a 30 per cent reduction from 1980 to 1999. During the first two decades of independence cash crops, such as tobacco and flowers, became more popular. This was also reflected in changing land usage. In 1970 commercial farmers devoted over 278,000 hectares of land to grain crops, and only 149,000 to industrial crops. In 1980 the gap had shrunk to 270,000 to 227,000, respectively, and by 1999 the areas devoted to each were almost equal at 194,000 and 197,000.

In the first two decades of independence some aspects of how farm workers lives were governed had changed, but by and large, as Rutherford has illustrated, those people living and working on commercial farmers were still resided under a form of ‘domestic government’ where the white farmer was principally in charge of the welfare of his or her workforce.[92] Wages remained low, employment was insecure and provision for farm workers remained inadequate. Indeed, various reports confirmed that white farmers’ provisions of nutrition, education and health services to their workers were inadequate. Within the white farming community, the paternalistic attitudes that were so prevalent during the colonial era, remained

intact at the turn of, and beyond, the new millennium.[93] There was an overwhelming failure to redefine labor relations in the post-colonial setting.

Zambia

The agricultural history of Zambia is very different to its neighbors. South Africa and Zimbabwe have histories of large-scale commercial farming operations, while Malawi was largely a peasant farming economy. Zambia was neither of these and state policy and practice over the course of the twentieth century meant that neither of these sectors became economically influential or important. Mining and industrialisation were seen as the paths to economic development. Yet, there was a small commercial farming sector established along the country's main railway arteries. However, in stark contrast to South Africa and Zimbabwe, there has been practically no scholarly investigation into the commercial agricultural labor experience after 1964. In the 1980s, Datta could write that 'farm labour remains, as it was in the 1950s, essentially seasonal, migratory, scattered, lacking in unity and largely inarticulate,' but there has been no investigation into these claims in any sustained manner.[94] There is need to understand in greater detail the dynamics on the commercial farms during the late colonial and post-colonial period. Even after 2000 with the movement of a number of white farmers from Zimbabwe to Zambia has produced no interest in this arena, which is surprising. Ex-farmers from Zimbabwe also moved to Mozambique and Nigeria, both of which resulted in academic literature on the new work and labor experiences that resulted.[95] There is a significant gap here that needs to be filled. For Datta, the historical dynamics of labour mobilisation in Zambia had an obvious impact on the post-colonial era. As such, labour on large estates and plantations remained 'among the most exploited, with little organised protest by the workers and, in contrast to Zimbabwe, with almost no "protectionist" state intervention.'[96]

In Zimbabwe and South Africa, there is a wealth of scholarship on the experiences of farm workers, their rights, freedoms, agency, and control. In addition, there are important findings on forms of political consciousness on farms, and how farm workers have navigated issues of race, belonging and citizenship. All these themes could do with more critical investigation in Zambia.

Urban Work/Informal Economies

Zimbabwe

At independence in 1980, Zimbabwe was the second most industrialized country in sub-Saharan Africa, with South Africa being the first. Manufacturing was a key sector of the economy, contributing nearly 25 per cent of the country's gross domestic product.[97] Mining and agriculture were the foundations of the Zimbabwe's early economy, but by the 1930s the manufacturing sector began to grow, and the colonial state sought to actively support this sector. The government sponsored advancements in gold, iron and steel production, as well as cotton spinning and other manufacturing processes.[98] After the 1930s, as Mlambo points out, 'manufacturing benefited from the de facto import substitution industrialization imposed on the country by the Second World War and, subsequently, from access to the larger domestic market provided by the Central African Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland from 1953 to 1963'.[99] Regional dynamics provided positive boosts for Zimbabwe's manufacturing exports. Phimister has illustrated how important the 1948 Customs Agreement between South Africa and Southern Rhodesia was in allowing manufacturing industries to grow after the Second World War.[100] In addition, federation made it easier for colonial Malawi and Zambia to purchase colonial Zimbabwe's manufactures. Manufacturing contributed 20 per cent to the country's GDP by 1965.[101]

The rise in manufacturing over this period is borne out in the labor statistics. In 1941 there were 17,000 African men and 1,200 African women in manufacturing. By 1956 these numbers had risen to almost 73,000 and 30,000 respectively.[102] The Censuses of Industrial Production, which recorded the number of manufacturing operations in business, average monthly number of employees, wages and outputs, shows a rise from 299 manufacturing units to 1,028 by 1965.[103] At this time the censuses recorded thirteen different sectors, which were further divided into various sub-sectors.[104] The rise in industrial workers coincided with increased rates of urbanisation. As African agriculture had been deliberately and systematically undermined, this forced many Africans to sell their labour, both in the rural and urban setting. For Arrighi, the changes in political control of Africans' lives meant 'discretionary' participation in the labor market by Africans was replaced by a 'necessary' requirement by the 1950s.[105] This contributed to higher rates of urbanization, as local (and labor migrants from neighbouring countries) moved to urban centres in search of employment.

The African population of Salisbury increased from 22,000 in 1936 to 75,000 by 1951.[106] Many hoped to find jobs in the industrial sector. While the manufacturing and industrial base expanded during the Second World War, the scope of this expansion has often been over

exaggerated. Such industrialisation that did occur was limited in scale and confined to the two main urban centres of Salisbury and Bulawayo. Manufacturing, which many colonial administrators hoped would become a major employer of African laborers, turned out to be less labor demanding than planners had previously assumed.[107] More people were employed in the growing commercial agricultural sector than in the factories of Salisbury and Bulawayo.[108] During the 1950s and 1960s, many of the workers in these new manufacturing jobs were also migrants. Over 50 per cent of this workforce were migrants, however, as with agriculture, this proportion had slipped to just 20 per cent in 1969.

At the time of independence, Zimbabwe still had one of the most vibrant and diversified manufacturing sectors on the continent. During the first decade of independence, Zimbabwe's economy performed well. From 1980-1982, the economy grew at over 10 per cent per annum and until the end of the decade it averaged 5.5 per cent per annum, which was higher than the sub-Saharan average.[109] Due to the introduction of minimum wages, many workers had more disposable income than before and this resulted in more demand for new goods and services, which brought growth to the industrial sector. The first few years of independence prompted Roger Riddell to write 'the story of industrialisation in Zimbabwe is undoubtedly one of success.' Riddell also noted widespread and sustained expansion of factories, and a deepening of the industry structure with the development of substantial inter-linkages within manufacturing and with other sectors of the economy. Overall, infrastructure was improving, while being generally well maintained. This meant that transport, service delivery and increasing efficiency were all offering the opportunities for sustained and rapid growth.[110]

By the 1990s, manufacturing was sluggish. One of the key reasons for the downturn in manufacturing at this point was the introduction of ESAP. This program pushed trade liberalisation and many outlets could no longer compete against cheap imports that began to arrive in Zimbabwe. As the economic stress exacerbated, many companies downsized or closed. Economic growth fell from 4 per cent to 0.9 per cent and, as industries and business closed, large numbers of workers were retrenched. Unemployment shot up from 32 per cent in 1990 to 44 per cent in 1993.[111] By 2000, manufacturing's contribution to GDP had declined to 18 per cent from 25 per cent at the beginning of the 1990s.[112] In 1982, there were 180,000 manufacturing workers. By 1992 this had only risen to 197,000, which fell to 181,000 in 2002. In terms of share of the labor force, manufacturing's workforce fell to 17 per cent in 2002, down from 19 per cent in 1982.[113] From 2002, severe political and economic crises saw the

Zimbabwean economy crumble. This resulted in the near total destruction of Zimbabwe's remaining manufacturing sector. As Mlambo has argued, Zimbabwe's once highly industrialised economy, which was probably second only to South Africa, had 'become a nation of vendors, with extremely high levels of unemployment as a result of a near-total collapse of the formal employment sector.' This, in turn, has meant that the majority of Zimbabwe's labor force have been made to eke out a living in the informal sector, and saw Zimbabwe transition from an industrial hub into a predominantly informal economy.[114]

Manufacturing has been an important component of the Zimbabwean economy since the 1950s. However, as Phimister observed in 1991, the history of manufacturing has received very little coverage, especially its development following the Second World War. Many have mentioned in passing its successes and importance, especially after UDI, yet there has been very little considered investigation into its historical roots.[115] In addition, the working lives, and experiences of those who worked in the factories and industrial workplaces have had almost no coverage. Most studies of urban labor have looked at how it has engaged with class and politics, how they have unionised and contested the state, and how labor interacted with processes of urbanisation and migration. Yet, there are no focused studies on labor in particular manufacturing processes, which remains a necessary hole to fill. We have those works for mining and agricultural labourers, but not the same for manufacturing.

Zambia

Manufacturing in Zambia has failed to live up to the expectations held by many at independence in 1964. At this point, mining revenue was high, urbanization was continuing apace, and all indications were that Zambia was on the threshold of an 'industrial revolution'.[116] The rising price of copper offered the government the opportunity to embark on a large-scale expenditure program to stimulate the economy. In addition, the UDI in colonial Zimbabwe in 1965 reduced trading with the south and put increasing significance on industrial self-sufficiency. From 1965 to 1972, wages and salaries increased by 7.2 per cent per annum, which increased demand for a wide range of locally produced goods and services. Manufacturing's contribution to GDP tripled between 1965 and 1970.[117] From the late 1960s Zambia did have a policy of import substitution and a parastatal to drive industrialisation, the Industrial Development Corporation (INDECO) However, this growth was capital intensive as it was reliant on import substitution to acquire sophisticated machinery, and expatriate labor to run and maintain it. After the collapse in copper prices in the 1970s, and economic implosion in

Zambia during the 1970s and 1980, these policy choices created severe problems for the fledgling manufacturing sector.

The decline in mining saw the manufacturing sector grow as a contributor to GDP. By 1988, manufacturing was responsible for 25 per cent of Zambia's GDP, up from 6/7 per cent in 1964.[118] This made the manufacturing sector one of the highest contributors to GDP in sub-Saharan Africa, although, as Potts has pointed out, 'much of this was derived from processing metal ores rather than producing capital goods or final products for consumption.'[119] The number of people working in manufacturing did grow during the 1980s. In 1969 there were 35,000 people employed in manufacturing. This grew to 64,000 in 1980, and then to almost 94,000 in 1990. Yet by the end of the decade, only 77,000 people were still employed in manufacturing. However, this was still more than in mining, commercial agriculture, and transport and communications. As a total share of the waged economy, however, manufacturing fell consistently from the 1960s. In 1961, manufacturing accounted for 9.2 per cent of the formal economy. This fell to 4.7 in 1969, 3.8 in 1990, and 2.8 in 2000.

In the last three to four decades, one area of growing interest is the rise of the informal economy.[120] As the waged economy of countries like Zambia and Zimbabwe collapsed after 1980, there has been a growth in the number of people finding livelihoods on the periphery of the formal economy. This is an important area of study and one that has generated a great deal of literature.[121] For Bolt, however, the informal and formal economies have interacted in interesting ways. Bolt refutes the practice of creating sharp distinctions between informal and formal economies, particularly in border regions and for migrant workers, where his work has focused. Indeed, the formal and informal economies not only coexist, but they "directly constitute one another".[122] Places of waged work are gravitational points in southern Africa, and migrants, traders, and border officials orbited around these islands of wage labor in a sea of informality and instability. As such, workers used wages to buy and trade goods, bought from town or mobile traders, to provide supplementary income. Furthermore, many Zimbabwean migrants purchased goods to send back home (along with remittances), and particular items that were in short supply and easy to sell became very popular on the border. Thus, compounds on border farms, while full of workers, was also full of business people, who used these activities to "establish provisional stability", while surrounded by transience and instability. Permanent workers wield considerable power in such arrangements, as their ability to foster relationships with traders and border officials gave them additional benefits. Bolt's

work is particularly important in this regard. Over the past few decades, formal waged work has declined in the region, partly due to political events such as those in Zimbabwe, but also due to external pressures such as the global financial crisis and shifts in the global economy.[123] Informal economies, and the range of activities that constitute them, are important for a vast number of peoples' livelihoods. As Raftoploulos has illustrated, the move away from wage labor is fundamentally altering the social structure of societies in Zimbabwe, and the region.[124] Indeed, these changes are not limited to Zimbabwe, as Bolt has observed. Thus, there is the need to revaluate the rigid distinctions of work categorizations. The shifts in "farm labor" are a useful lens with which to look at changes in labor relations across the economic spectrum. The fall in wage labour, and the rise in informality and multiple overlapping economic activities, invites us to reimagine the future of work and nature of work categorizations in the region.

Discussion of the Literature

Labor and processes of economic change have been well documented and keenly debated in southern Africa. The availability of sources, in public archives, as well as those generated through company records, ethnographies, oral interviews and the like, have added to the depth of this work. While noted early, the examination of labor history went through a lull in the 1990s and 2000s, recent decades have seen an uptick in the focus on new forms of labor. The informal economy is one such area. But other important areas of work - such as domestic service, the role and agency of women, and the extent of child labor, have all garnered much more attention recently. Other activities that might not have been once thought of as 'labor' or 'work' are also starting to find traction. There is more attention to examining forms of slavery in the region, as well as a reassessment of the labor involved in household labor. This field of study is dynamic and has responded to the new social and political contexts on the continent. It will continue to do so. As Freund noted, 'Labour in South Africa has been conceptualized forcefully and powerfully in the past half-century through the lens of politics and it is likely that as new analytical and historic trends emerge, this will continue to be the case'.[125]

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The record keeping on labor data in the region is patchy and inconsistent. The colonial state created records once it was established, but the limits of the state meant that much of the data collected was partial and incomplete. The post-colonial states in southern Africa have also encountered problems in producing data. The underfunding of statistical agencies as well as

the impact of various economic crises wreaked havoc on these activities in places like Zimbabwe and Zambia. The national archives of Zimbabwe, Zambia, and South Africa, however, are still the best repositories to access information from the censuses, labor reports, and industrial censuses of those countries.

There are, however, several other places to access labor data. Our recent publication, *Labour and Economic Change in Southern Africa* (Routledge), contains primary data relating to labour and working populations in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Malawi, collated from the respective national archives.[126] Another source of data is the Global Collaboratory on the History of Labour Relations, held at the International Institute of Social History. Here you can find data on labour relations in select African countries (and other parts of the world - https://datasets.iisg.amsterdam/dataverse/labourrelations)

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